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be understood here, as recommending that youth should be at once put upon the study of Plutarch; on the contrary, I should reserve him as well as Thucydides and Polybius for the more advanced scholar, and should make a beginning with Herodotus and Xenophon. But I shall at this time make no further remarks on *Plutarch*, in illustrating whose works I have spent a great part of my life; it being my intention to reserve all I have to say respecting him for the edition of his works which I have undertaken, and which the Oxford press is now occupied in printing.

[In our next Number, we shall give the remainder of this Article, which contains an account of the critical labour that Wyttenbach has bestowed upon the correction of the text of his authors, and, (what will be particularly interesting and valuable) a minute narrative of the manner in which he himself studied the classics, and the method he recommends as the most useful to others.]



On the *Happy Temperament*.

THAT uninterrupted cheerfulness which laughs away the evils of life, and meets all its accidents with the same careless good humour, has been the praise of many, and the envy of still more amongst mankind. This was the character which Goldsmith most delighted to draw, and which appears often delineated in his pages, and always with peculiar happiness, and for which, amidst his frequent embarrassments and vexations, he seems to have sighed with a hopeless solicitude—for it was very remote from his own. So much has this easiness of disposition attracted the admiration of the world, that it has been denominated, by way of eminence, the *happy temperament*. Yet, admired and praised as it has been, perhaps, if we look narrowly into the subject, we shall find it far from entering into the character of the truly wise and good man, the man of feeling and reflection, the philosopher, the benefactor of his species. To be moved to sorrow by the sufferings of others, and to grieve for calamities of our own, are laws of our nature, ordained for sacred and beneficent purposes, and are the moving principles of all that we do for our own happiness, and all the good that we impart to others. The heart that is dead to these natural and healthy impulses,

is hardened in no common degree, and that philosophy, which would deliberately shut the heart against them, is, at once, selfish and impious. He who looks round on his brethren of the human race, and sees the innumerable varieties of physical and mental suffering which assail them—the wretchedness and poverty—the agonies of pain—the miseries of vice—the inevitable calamities of nature—the wrongs which they heap on one another—will be inexcusable if unaffected by the melancholy review, and the more enlarged his knowledge and the warmer his benevolence, the deeper will be his sympathy. Yet none need go far for objects of compassion, and he who mingles least with society, will see, in the little circle in which he moves, enough of misery and malignity. It is the pain which spectacles of this nature give us, that has in all ages prompted the attempts of the good and the humane to improve the condition of our species. It is the fountain which feeds all the gentle and assiduous charities of civilized life. The strong sense of the evils and inconveniences of existing establishments has raised up at different periods the great reformers of mankind. Let it not be said that all this good might be effected without first awakening these feelings. They are almost inseparable from their proper objects; without them we should have nothing to remind us of our duty—no impulse to urge us to action. Not to feel and not to know the evils that attend the present condition of mankind are nearly the same thing; he who has estimated them truly, and yet contemplates them without emotion, is as distempered in mind, as he must be diseased in body, who should put his hand into the fire and be insensible to pain. And though few can expect to signalize themselves by great exertions in the cause of philanthropy, yet much may be done in the most limited sphere of human action, to enlighten, to amend, and to relieve our fellow creatures. Such are the feelings and the duties which spring from our more general relation to society. They ought not to destroy our tranquillity, but in every well regulated mind they must occasionally repress the overflowings of gayety and beget sober and sometimes painful reflections. But in our nearer and more particular connexions with our kind, as our enjoyments are greater, so they are chastened with more distressing interruptions. In those situations, there is mingled with our most valuable blessings, in their fullest enjoyment, something of a

melancholy nature—with the ties of friendship and love and natural affection, even when least injured by misfortune, God has interwoven the threads of a tender and pensive solicitude. The dread of losing what is so dear to us, taught us by our past experience of life and by the ordinary courses of Providence, is ever present in a sort of secret and undefinable sadness, and while it makes us more highly prize those blessings, and more carefully provide for their preservation, is yet kind in preparing us for the shock which we must suffer when they are taken from us. But hard and bitter is the trial when we see those whom we love drawn towards the grave by the irresistible progress of disease and decay, or when we are called to witness their last struggles and look on the dread consummation which we cannot avert, or—most afflicting of all—when we see them staining a virtuous reputation with errors which no repentance of ours can wash away. Yet the feelings which spring up in our hearts from scenes of this nature are not given to us in vain; our attentions may render more gentle the decline which we cannot retard, our affectionate assiduities may light with a weak smile the eye of the dying friend, our tenderness may win back the wanderer to the path of duty.

In those circumstances of our existence which solely respect ourselves, we shall find the materials of melancholy reflection, if possible, still more abundant. A thousand painful emotions pierce the heart—a thousand pangs too deep-felt and delicate to be uttered to others, and which the mind hardly ventures to embody in language, in its own secret communings with itself. These, though of little consequence to any one else, have yet an important effect on him who is the subject of them. The frequent wanderings of heart and conduct, which are specks on the most pure and innocent life, call forth, in the virtuous and ingenuous bosom, that remorse without which no one can become better, and without which virtue itself would be a stranger to mankind. The strong natural desire to obtain the good-will and good opinion of others, without which society would lose its strongest tie, renders us more painfully sensible to the accusations of slander, from whose industrious malice the most blameless character is never secure. Yet we thence learn to regulate our conduct by stricter maxims, and, watching closely over ourselves, to live not only above cen-

sure, but above suspicion. The sacred and instinctive dread of death, which a thousand circumstances are perpetually calling up in our minds, and whose hold on the heart is so powerful that it requires more than common fortitude to prevent it, at times, from degenerating into an unmanly weakness, while it is one of the most melancholy, is, at the same time, one of the most salutary emotions of our nature.

These sensations, however, distressing as they often are, have, perhaps, when not carried beyond a certain limit, no unfavourable effect on our enjoyments; they sometimes even present us with peculiar enjoyments of their own. The returns of delight are rendered doubly welcome to us by intervals of sadness; we love them more and cling to them more closely for the soft tinge of pensiveness which past sufferings have thrown over them. Sympathy and sorrow, when not too acute, are never unaccompanied with a certain satisfaction, in the very agitation and employment which they give to the most blameless feelings of the heart. In the performance of the duties which they point out to us, there are hidden the sources of a most exquisite and refined gratification. Awful as the prospect of death justly is, he, who has thought of it most, will perhaps recollect, that he has sometimes felt a thrill of wild and strange delight as he contemplated this great change of being.

In this catalogue of the evils of life, I have not spoken of those which are transient and accidental. Innumerable occasions of sorrow have been passed over; I have dwelt only on such as are inevitable and common to all—such as are ever with us, colouring the whole course of our lives. But far be it from me to become an advocate for the gloom of despondency. He who sits down, obstinately to indulge in that sorrow which knows no hope, sins against all the purposes for which he was sent into the world. So far as the more melancholy emotions tend to make the heart better, and incline us to do good to mankind, so far they should be indulged, and perhaps cultivated, and no farther. He who governs himself by these principles, as his aim is the welfare of society, will ever desire to promote innocent and well-timed cheerfulness; he will never, without a benevolent purpose, check the sallies of gayety; he will not wish to throw the slightest shade over those weak and wintry glimpses of happiness which are sometimes permitted to find their way to

this earth. Accordingly the emotions of which I have spoken are a domestic and timid race, which love to dwell around the heart where they had their birth, and dread to be produced to the world. They are seen rather in actions than in words—they may sometimes cast a shade over the brow, but the voice of querulous repining is heard oftenest from the hard-hearted and the selfish. In short, the melancholy feelings, when called up by their proper and natural causes and confined to their proper limits, are the parents of almost all our virtues. The temperament of unbroken cheerfulness is the temperament of insensibility.